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DIA Declassification/Release Instructions on File

7 October 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT : Production of Military Estimates

REFERENCE : The Director's memorandum, same subject, dated 4 May 1970

1. We have had five months' experience in the production of military estimates under the concept laid out in the Director's 4 May memorandum. NIE 11-8 is before the USIB representatives, NIE 11-3 is coming to the Board of National Estimates for its consideration shortly, and NIE 11-14 is in the early drafting stage.

2. We now know enough to know that the present arrangements are unsatisfactory. In this memorandum, I propose to set forth the situation as I see it and to suggest a course of action to achieve the "satisfactory modus operandi" called for by the Director.

3. Let's begin by reviewing paragraph 4 of the Director's memorandum:

"4. The paper I envisage represents a sharp break from the format of the past. The basic section would be more specific in detail, more technical in its discussion, and more involved in sorting and evaluating the evidence. I feel it essential, therefore, to assign the preparation and staffing of this part of the estimate to those offices in the Agency which have the daily responsibility for analyzing developments in these fields: namely, OSR in the DDI and OSI and FMSAC in the DDS&T. I would expect the Board and Staff of ONE to retain its present responsibility for the two most estimative parts of the NIE: the drawing together of major judgments and conclusions and the brief statement of evidence and analyses. Responsibility would also

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remain with the Board, and specifically with the Board member you designate to chair the estimate, for producing a final Agency draft and seeing it through USIB coordination."

The Present Situation

4. Given this procedure, there are three mechanisms now operating directly to produce military estimates. The first is the DDI-DDS&T team, with a team chief designated jointly by the DDI and the DDS&T. The second is the Estimate Chairman and the Board of National Estimates. The third is (at least so far as the Soviet military estimates now in work are concerned) the SMT Staff.

5. The DDI-DDS&T Team. In each case, a senior person has been named team chief for a particular estimate and given full responsibility for preparation of the basic draft. Each team chief has in turn been able to call upon the resources of his office and the other two in the OSR-OSI-FMSAC triumvirate for contributions and help. Working arrangements so far have varied considerably between the three team chiefs--
25X1A9A []--because of their different working styles, different positions, and the different problems of the various estimates.

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6. When [] returned from [] in May, he was given one duty--to produce 11-8--and none other. About the end of June, he was given the full-time assistance of an experienced analyst from the Strategic Attack Branch of OSR.

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7. The situation has been somewhat different in the preparation of 11-3, and I think our early troubles with the Board and the Staff on 11-3 are to some degree the result of this. [] returned from [] to assume the team chief role for 11-3. He was not relieved of his duties as a division chief but instead tried both to run his division and to prepare the estimate. There may have been excellent organizational reasons for this, but the needs of 11-3 were bound to suffer.

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8. On 29 July, [] was freed of his duties as chief of the Land Warfare Branch in OSR to concentrate on the preparation of 11-14. It was not possible immediately to extricate him from his involvement in NSSM-84 and this has affected work on 11-14 to a degree. (I think we are about through with NSSM-84, at least so far as Ben is concerned.)

9. The Estimate Chairman and the Board. The Director's memorandum notes that responsibility remains with the Board, and specifically with the Board member designated to chair the estimate, to produce a final Agency draft and see it through USIB coordination. What this means in terms of relations with the DDI-DDS&T team chief has varied greatly from chairman to

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chairman. [] has worked closely and, I think, effectively with [], with little Staff involvement or interference. This reflects [] confidence in his own knowledge of the subject and his own ideas, as well as [] understanding and skill in writing estimates and dealing with chairmen.

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10. I am not as familiar with relations between [] on 11-3 but I get the impression that [] has looked to the Staff to be more of an intermediary in the process than [] has. It is too soon to say how [] will operate once 11-14 shifts into high gear.

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11. The Staff. The only mention made of the Staff in the Director's memorandum comes in the sentence: "I would expect the Board and the Staff of ONE to retain its present responsibility for the two most estimative parts of the NIE: the drawing together of major judgments and conclusions and the brief statement of evidence and analyses." The position of the Staff under the new procedure clearly is difficult and troublesome, for everyone involved.

12. There are two facts at work that have conspired to limit the usefulness and effectiveness of the Staff. In the first place, there is today such a volume of incoming material relevant to Soviet (and Chinese) military matters that no staff of half

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a dozen can possibly stay on top of it. With 150 or so professionals, OSR can hardly manage this-- and, for the SMT Staff, there's the military subject matter of OSI and FMSAC to boot. As a result, the SMT staff does almost no original or creative work with the evidence and must depend on the work of others. The Director took note of the effect of this when he said: "I feel it essential to assign the preparation and staffing of this part of the estimate to those offices in the Agency which have the daily responsibility for analyzing developments in these fields: namely, OSR in the DDI and OSI and FMSAC in the DDS&T."

13. The second factor is less tangible but, I think, even more relevant. It is a fact of life that when the Nixon Administration took office, bringing with it a different outlook, a skepticism toward the intelligence estimates of the past, and a new way of using intelligence in the policy-making machinery, OSR was a year and a half old. As the first NSSMs rolled in, calling for intelligence support on strategic military issues, it was this Office that largely furnished forth the representation and the work. OSI and FMSAC were also drawn in, particularly in the SALT matters. But significantly, the SMT Staff was almost totally left out. Aside from occasionally coordinating and commenting on drafts prepared by OSR (or OSI or FMSAC), the SMT Staff has not had to deal on a day-by-day basis with the demands of the NSC staff and Dr. Kissinger.

14. As a result, the Staff (and, frankly, I think the Board as well) lacks a feel for how this Administration wants to have evidence presented and judgments supported, and it lacks a sense of how matters are perceived by the very people for whom the NIEs are intended. I think the gyrations we went through to get the Memo to Holders of NIE 11-8-68 out testify to this problem.

15. In short, at this point I think the Staff lacks both the competence and the awareness of what needs to be done to be an effective and constructive participant in the estimative process. The members of the SMT Staff are very human people. The Director's memorandum was a direct slap at them and they know it. They have, in other words, little incentive to make a

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success of the new procedure or work out a satisfactory modus operandi. (Let us note one other thing before we pass on: with the new procedure for drafting estimates and with the transfer of the NIPP to DIA, the SMT Staff is not overly busy.)

25X1A9A 16. As I have indicated above, the involvement of the Staff in the new procedure has depended largely on how the Estimate chairman wanted to use it. [] 25X1A9A
25X1A9A and [] seem to have looked to the Staff to play a larger role than []. In the case of 11-8, the Staff has done some drafting in competition with the DDI-DDS&T team and it has sometimes been necessary to force a choice between the team's draft and the Staff's. This has been, from our viewpoint, wasteful, time-consuming, and unnecessary. On 11-3, the Staff man [] produced the extensive and detailed comments on the team's first draft that were the basis for [] suggestion that that draft be discarded and the DIA contribution be used in its stead. We are not very far into 11-14 but we already have the extensive comments of the Staff man [] 25X1A9A
25X1A9A on one Annex suggesting that the draft be thrown out because DIA almost certainly will not like it.

DIA and the Military Estimates

17. I think it is appropriate at this point to consider what is happening in DIA and how it relates to the production of military estimates. The new procedure was a matter of some surprise and concern to DIA. Whereas DIA could accept ONE drafting the military estimates, drawing upon--at least in theory--the contributions of DIA as well as OSR, OSI, FMSAC, and others, it was something else to have working offices like OSR doing the drafting.

25X1A 18. The change in procedure coincided with []'s elevation to Brigadier General, his assignment to DIA, and General Bennett's reworking of the DIA structure. As a result, [] 25X1A
has recently been named the head of a new Estimates group in DIA to take effect about 1 November. General Bennett has said that his representative to the Board's meetings on the initial drafts will be []. And in a memorandum to the Director on 26 August 1970, General Bennett said:

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"May I suggest you consider assigning drafting responsibilities to DIA for the next series of Military estimates? It could facilitate their earlier preparation and more fully utilize the talents of our respective staffs." (I don't know whether this memorandum has been replied to; the best reply probably is no reply.)

Discussion

19. The move to the new procedure is sound. OSR, OSI, and FMSAC do have the requisite substantive expertise to produce superior estimates drafts and they know the needs and interests of people on the NSC staff and in the Pentagon. Furthermore, from their regular involvement in preparing the Director's NSC, Congressional, and other briefings, they have an appreciation of his views and concerns.

20. We need to do two things: one, to remove the Staff from its present ambiguous, essentially sterile role in the production of military estimates; and two, to create a military estimates staff that is organizationally as well as substantively responsive both to the DDI and DDS&T and to the Board of National Estimates. It's not that we don't need a Staff. It's that we need the right kind in the right place.

21. There is one other aspect that merits comment. We have been extraordinarily successful so far in making a cooperative arrangement work. As long as Carl Duckett is DDS&T, this will probably be fine. But I suggest that for effective management over the longer term, we need to give some attention to the principle of unity of command. It is less important whether it is the DDI or the DDS&T who is ultimately responsible to the Director for making the new procedure work than it is that one or the other be in charge.

22. Proposal. I suggest we do the following:

a. Reassign the persons and the positions of the SMT Staff (and the individual or individuals in the FE Staff concerned with military estimates) to the Intelligence Directorate.

b. From these positions, create a small Military Estimates Staff which is organizationally

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a part of the Office of the DDI but which administratively functions under the Director of Strategic Research (in much the manner that the D/OCI oversees the functioning of the Operations Center for the DDI).

c. The persons from the SMT and FE Staffs would be assigned to substantive analytical positions in OSR (or in OSI or FMSAC or other places they may prefer if opportunities exist).

d. The new Military Estimates Staff would be headed by a senior and experienced officer whose duties would include advising the DDI and DDS&T on military estimative matters, meeting the needs of the members of the Board throughout the year but particularly when military estimates were in progress, overseeing the preparation of drafts, and relating the capabilities of OSR, OSI, and FMSAC to the military estimates schedule.

e. The chief of the Military Estimates Staff would be assisted during the off-season by one or two full-time junior officers.

f. When estimates were in progress, the Military Estimates Staff would be augmented by individuals drawn from OSR, OSI, and FMSAC on a full-time basis. They would work under the guidance of the chief of the Military Estimates Staff for as long as required to produce the estimates draft and see it through USIB. They would return to their substantive analytical positions when no longer needed.

23. This proposal would do little to settle the problem that the Board appears to have with the whole concept set forth in the Director's 4 May memorandum. Judging from the reactions of the three Board members who have been involved as chairmen under the new procedure, their basic problem is that the estimate drafts are coming to them in formats and lengths they do not like, prepared by people who have other masters (starting with the DDI and the DDS&T). This seems to me to be inherent in the new procedure. With time, the strangeness will wear off and the Board will see that the procedure has strengths to offer a chairman. I think this proposal would help to that end.

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24. Under this proposal, I think we could effectively mobilize and organize the resources of the DDI and the DDS&T to produce the Soviet and Chinese military estimates. We would remove the problems caused by the "fifth wheel" position of the present Staff. We would take care of the work-no work cycle that has affected the SMT staff in the past. The offices and individuals with the daily responsibility for analyzing developments in the military field would be preparing the estimates drafts. And we would have an effective operating system to fend off any further proposals by DIA to take over drafting responsibilities.

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Strategic Research